

MARISTPOLL

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POLL MUST BE SOURCED:

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll*

Increased Support for Protective Netting In MLB Stadiums

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This HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll Reports:

Major League Baseball fans have become more receptive to the idea of adding protective netting to baseball stadiums. In fact, six in ten baseball fans, 60%, up from 54% in April 2016, think MLB teams should be required to add netting to sections closest to the field. 35%, down from 41% last year, do not think teams should be required to add this safeguard to sections above the dugout or along the baselines.

Regionally, 67% of fans in the Northeast, up from 61% previously, and 60% in the West, up from 43% say additional safeguards should be in place to protect fans from foul balls and bats. Majorities of fans in the Midwest, 55%, and in the South, 58%, also say the MLB should be required to put additional safety netting in their stadiums. These proportions are little changed from, 56% and 54%, respectively, in 2016.

More than three in four baseball fans, 76%, do not think watching a baseball game through protective netting detracts from the enjoyment of the experience. Included here are 68% who believe it does not change how they feel about watching the game and 8% who think it makes the experience more enjoyable. 21% think it will make a trip out to the ballpark less enjoyable, and 3% are unsure. These findings are comparable to those reported in 2016.

When asked about whether or not fans would prefer to sit in an area with or without protective netting, there has been a shift in public opinion. A majority of baseball fans nationally, 52%, now say they would prefer to sit in an area *with* netting while 41% report

*All references to the survey must be sourced as "HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll"

they would prefer to sit in a section *without* it. In April 2016, the opposite was the case. A majority, 54%, said they *did not want netting* in front of their seats, and 41% said they *wanted* the extra protection from foul balls and bats.

In the Northeast, Midwest, and South, there has been a notable increase in the proportion of baseball fans who would prefer to sit in an area with this protective covering. 58% of fans in the Northeast, up from 41%, 52% in the Midwest, up from 39%, and 52% in the South, an increase from 43%, have this opinion. In the West, fans divide. 45% report they would rather sit in an unprotected section while 43% say they would like safety netting covering them. Still, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of those in the West who say they would purchase seats protected by netting. In 2016, 40% had this opinion.

Men have also had a change of heart. 45% of men who are baseball fans, up from 29% last year, say they would prefer to sit in a section protected from foul bats and balls. 47% of men, down from 68%, said they would not. Among women, 60% up slightly from 55%, would choose seats covered by the netting. 35% would not.

The closer baseball fans get to the field, the more likely they are to want to sit in a section with protective netting. If their seats are above the dugout or along the baselines, 60% of fans, compared with 50% in 2016, say they would prefer to sit in a section with this safeguard. 35%, compared with 47% previously, would prefer to sit in uncovered sections.

When children enter the equation, most baseball fans say they would select seats in a shielded area. 80% of fans say they would select seats in an area with netting while 17% would not. When this question was last reported in 2016, 77% said they would sit in a section with protective netting if they were accompanied by a child. 21%, at that time, would prefer seats in a section without the covering.

The debate over adding protective netting to stadiums re-emerged after a toddler was struck and injured by a foul ball at Yankee Stadium this year. In such situations, whose responsibility is it to protect those in the stands? Fans divide. 49% say it is up to the fans to look out for their own safety and their children's while 46% think stadiums should take action to protect fans.

A gender gap exists. 56% of men say the onus is on the fans while 54% of women say teams need to protect the fans and their children at the stadium.

Most baseball fans have first-hand experience at the ballpark. 83% have at some point attended a Major League Baseball game while only 17% have not. How many Americans are baseball fans? 55% of Americans, up slightly from 50% in 2016, say they follow professional baseball, at least, a little. Of note, the proportion of Americans who say they follow the sport a great deal, 14%, is nearly double the proportion in 2016, 8%.

*All references to the survey must be sourced as "HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll"

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll of 1,093 National Adults

This survey of 1,093 adults was conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017 by The Marist Poll, sponsored and funded in partnership with HBO Real Sports. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the contiguous United States were contacted on landline or mobile numbers and interviewed in English by telephone using live interviewers. Mobile telephone numbers were randomly selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation from Survey Sampling International. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. Mobile phones are treated as individual devices. After validation of age, personal ownership, and non-business-use of the mobile phone, interviews are typically conducted with the person answering the phone. To increase coverage, this mobile sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of landline phone numbers from ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc. Within each landline household, a single respondent is selected through a random selection process to increase the representativeness of traditionally under-covered survey populations. Assistance was provided by Luce Research for data collection. The samples were then combined and balanced to reflect the 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates for age, gender, income, race, and region. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. There are 577 baseball fans. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 4.1 percentage points. The error margin was not adjusted for sample weights and increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample

		National Adults	Baseball Fans
		Col %	Col %
National Adults		100%	
Baseball Fans		55%	100%
Gender	Men	49%	55%
	Women	51%	45%
Age	Under 45	47%	43%
	45 or older	53%	57%
Age	18 to 29	22%	18%
	30 to 44	25%	24%
	45 to 59	26%	29%
	60 or older	26%	29%
Race	White	62%	62%
	African American	11%	11%
	Latino	14%	15%
	Other	12%	11%
Region	Northeast	18%	19%
	Midwest	21%	23%
	South	37%	37%
	West	24%	21%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	48%	45%
	\$50,000 or more	52%	55%
Education	Not college graduate	58%	55%
	College graduate	42%	45%
Interview Type	Landline	37%	37%
	Cell phone	63%	63%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=1093 MOE +/- 3.0 percentage points. National Baseball Fans: n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		National Adults			
		Do you watch or follow professional baseball a great deal, a good amount, a little, or not at all?			
		A great deal	A good amount	A little	Not at all
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		14%	11%	30%	45%
Region	Northeast	22%	10%	28%	40%
	Midwest	21%	14%	26%	39%
	South	7%	11%	36%	45%
	West	13%	10%	24%	52%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	11%	11%	30%	47%
	\$50,000 or more	16%	12%	31%	41%
Education	Not college graduate	13%	10%	28%	49%
	College graduate	14%	13%	31%	41%
Age	Under 45	14%	11%	25%	51%
	45 or older	14%	12%	34%	40%
Age	18 to 29	14%	9%	22%	55%
	30 to 44	14%	12%	27%	47%
	45 to 59	16%	9%	34%	40%
	60 or older	12%	15%	34%	39%
Race	White	11%	14%	31%	45%
	Non-white	19%	9%	29%	44%
Gender	Men	16%	12%	33%	39%
	Women	13%	11%	26%	51%
Interview Type	Landline	15%	13%	26%	46%
	Cell phone	14%	10%	32%	44%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=1093 MOE +/- 3.0 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

National Adults				
Do you watch or follow professional baseball a great deal, a good amount, a little, or not at all?				
	A great deal	A good amount	A little	Not at all
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	14%	11%	30%	45%
April 2016	8%	11%	31%	50%

Marist Poll National Adults

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans	
		Have you ever been to a major league stadium to watch a baseball game?	
		Yes	No
		Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		83%	17%
Region	Northeast	85%	15%
	Midwest	87%	13%
	South	75%	25%
	West	88%	12%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	69%	31%
	\$50,000 or more	93%	7%
Education	Not college graduate	78%	22%
	College graduate	91%	9%
Age	Under 45	84%	16%
	45 or older	81%	19%
Age	18 to 29	79%	21%
	30 to 44	88%	12%
	45 to 59	84%	16%
	60 or older	78%	22%
Race	White	89%	11%
	Non-white	71%	29%
Gender	Men	86%	14%
	Women	78%	22%
Interview Type	Landline	81%	19%
	Cell phone	84%	16%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans		
Have you ever been to a major league stadium to watch a baseball game?		
	Yes	No
	Row %	Row %
October 2017	83%	17%
April 2016	81%	19%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans		
		If you had your choice while attending a Major League Baseball game, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?		
		With netting	Without netting	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		52%	41%	7%
Attended MLB Game		52%	41%	7%
Region	Northeast	58%	38%	4%
	Midwest	52%	44%	4%
	South	52%	41%	7%
	West	45%	43%	12%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	50%	44%	6%
	\$50,000 or more	53%	40%	7%
Education	Not college graduate	50%	43%	6%
	College graduate	55%	37%	7%
Age	Under 45	39%	56%	5%
	45 or older	61%	31%	8%
Age	18 to 29	32%	62%	6%
	30 to 44	44%	52%	4%
	45 to 59	55%	38%	7%
	60 or older	68%	23%	9%
Race	White	55%	38%	7%
	Non-white	47%	47%	6%
Gender	Men	45%	47%	8%
	Women	60%	35%	5%
Interview Type	Landline	58%	31%	11%
	Cell phone	48%	48%	5%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans			
If you had your choice while attending a Major League Baseball game, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?			
	With netting	Without netting	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	52%	41%	7%
April 2016	41%	54%	6%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans		
		How about if your seats are close to the field such as above the dugout or along the baselines, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?		
		With netting	Without netting	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		60%	35%	5%
Attended MLB Game		63%	33%	4%
Region	Northeast	67%	31%	3%
	Midwest	56%	39%	5%
	South	58%	37%	5%
	West	64%	30%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	58%	37%	5%
	\$50,000 or more	62%	35%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	58%	37%	5%
	College graduate	66%	30%	4%
Age	Under 45	51%	45%	4%
	45 or older	68%	27%	5%
Age	18 to 29	44%	52%	4%
	30 to 44	56%	40%	3%
	45 to 59	63%	34%	3%
	60 or older	73%	21%	7%
Race	White	64%	31%	5%
	Non-white	55%	41%	4%
Gender	Men	53%	43%	4%
	Women	70%	24%	6%
Interview Type	Landline	65%	29%	6%
	Cell phone	58%	38%	4%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans

How about if your seats are close to the field such as above the dugout or along the baselines, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?

	With netting	Without netting	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	60%	35%	5%
April 2016	50%	47%	2%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans		
		How about if you are with small children, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?		
		With netting	Without netting	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		80%	17%	3%
Attended MLB Game		80%	17%	3%
Region	Northeast	81%	17%	1%
	Midwest	78%	19%	3%
	South	82%	14%	4%
	West	77%	20%	3%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	80%	16%	3%
	\$50,000 or more	80%	18%	2%
Education	Not college graduate	77%	20%	3%
	College graduate	83%	14%	3%
Age	Under 45	74%	25%	2%
	45 or older	85%	12%	4%
Age	18 to 29	70%	29%	1%
	30 to 44	76%	22%	2%
	45 to 59	81%	15%	3%
	60 or older	88%	8%	4%
Race	White	81%	15%	4%
	Non-white	77%	21%	2%
Gender	Men	77%	20%	3%
	Women	83%	14%	3%
Interview Type	Landline	83%	13%	4%
	Cell phone	78%	19%	3%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans			
How about if you are with small children, would you prefer to sit in an area with netting to block foul balls and bats, or in an area without netting?			
	With netting	Without netting	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	80%	17%	3%
April 2016	77%	21%	1%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans		
		Do you think Major League Baseball teams should or should not be required to add additional protective netting in areas close to the field such as above the dugout or along the baselines?		
		Should be required	Should not be required	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		60%	35%	5%
Attended MLB Game		57%	38%	5%
Region	Northeast	67%	26%	6%
	Midwest	55%	38%	7%
	South	58%	38%	4%
	West	60%	36%	4%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	68%	28%	4%
	\$50,000 or more	56%	39%	5%
Education	Not college graduate	61%	33%	6%
	College graduate	59%	38%	4%
Age	Under 45	52%	45%	3%
	45 or older	65%	28%	7%
Age	18 to 29	57%	41%	2%
	30 to 44	48%	48%	4%
	45 to 59	65%	31%	4%
	60 or older	66%	25%	9%
Race	White	56%	39%	5%
	Non-white	67%	28%	5%
Gender	Men	53%	42%	5%
	Women	67%	27%	6%
Interview Type	Landline	64%	28%	8%
	Cell phone	57%	39%	4%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans

Do you think Major League Baseball teams should or should not be required to add additional protective netting in areas close to the field such as above the dugout or along the baselines?

	Should be required	Should not be required	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	60%	35%	5%
April 2016	54%	41%	6%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans			
		Do you think watching a Major League Baseball game through protective netting at the stadium makes the game more enjoyable for you, less enjoyable, or doesn't change how you feel about watching the game?			
		Doesn't change how you feel about watching the game			
		More enjoyable	Less enjoyable	Doesn't change how you feel about watching the game	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		8%	21%	68%	3%
Attended MLB Game		7%	23%	68%	3%
Region	Northeast	7%	23%	67%	3%
	Midwest	9%	18%	68%	5%
	South	10%	18%	69%	2%
	West	4%	25%	68%	3%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	9%	15%	71%	4%
	\$50,000 or more	6%	24%	68%	2%
Education	Not college graduate	9%	18%	69%	4%
	College graduate	6%	25%	68%	1%
Age	Under 45	2%	23%	73%	2%
	45 or older	11%	19%	66%	4%
Age	18 to 29	1%	26%	73%	0%
	30 to 44	2%	22%	72%	4%
	45 to 59	8%	25%	66%	2%
	60 or older	15%	13%	66%	6%
Race	White	7%	23%	68%	3%
	Non-white	10%	17%	70%	3%
Gender	Men	5%	24%	68%	3%
	Women	11%	16%	69%	3%
Interview Type	Landline	12%	19%	65%	4%
	Cell phone	6%	22%	70%	2%

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Baseball Fans: Interviews conducted October 15th through October 17th, 2017, n=577 MOE +/- 4.1 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

National Baseball Fans

Do you think watching a Major League Baseball game through protective netting at the stadium makes the game more enjoyable for you, less enjoyable, or doesn't change how you feel about watching the game?

	More enjoyable	Less enjoyable	Doesn't change how you feel about watching the game	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
October 2017	8%	21%	68%	3%
April 2016	8%	25%	66%	1%

Marist Poll National Baseball Fans

HBO Real Sports/Marist Poll National Tables

		Baseball Fans		
		It is the responsibility of the fans to look out for their own safety and the safety of their children	It is the responsibility of the stadiums to take action to protect the safety of their fans	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Baseball Fans		49%	46%	5%
Attended MLB Game		51%	44%	4%
Region	Northeast	47%	49%	4%
	Midwest	47%	46%	6%
	South	50%	45%	5%
	West	51%	44%	5%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	44%	49%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	53%	44%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	45%	48%	7%
	College graduate	52%	45%	3%
Age	Under 45	54%	41%	5%
	45 or older	46%	49%	5%
Age	18 to 29	47%	45%	8%
	30 to 44	59%	38%	3%
	45 to 59	45%	50%	5%
	60 or older	46%	48%	6%
Race	White	51%	43%	5%
	Non-white	44%	51%	5%
Gender	Men	56%	40%	4%
	Women	40%	54%	7%
Interview Type	Landline	47%	46%	7%
	Cell phone	50%	46%	4%

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